

BRIEFLY

US policy on Canada unchanged:

The State Department denied a senior official was signalling a policy shift when he declared "we are very strong supporters of the Canada." AP reports from Washington.

The remark by Under Secretary Peter Tarnoff on Wednesday at a briefing for foreign reporters seemed to reflect US opposition to Quebec's independence.

UN to keep observers in Abkhazia:

The Security Council has voted unanimously to keep its 136 observers in Abkhazia, despite stalled talks toward a political settlement in the breakaway region of Georgia. AP reports from United Nations.

The resolution approved on Thursday calls on Georgia and Abkhazia to speed up peace negotiations and accelerate the return of refugees. It extends the UN observer mandate for four months.

11 die in Chinese boat capsizes:

An overloaded boat carrying guests from a wedding in southwestern China capsized as it was crossing a river, drowning 11 people, including eight children, said a local newspaper reaching Beijing, yesterday. Reuter reports from Beijing.

The group of 21 people, including 17 children aged between three and 17, were hurrying back from a wedding on January 2 to catch a train and persuaded a boat owner to ferry them all across a river, the Guangdi Daily said.

Police attack Amazon Indians:

Brazilian police officers and soldiers attacked Amazon Rainforest Indians who oppose a dam project threatening their traditional lifestyle, an Indian rights group said on Thursday. Reuter reports from Rio De Janeiro.

The motive for the invasion was to guarantee the construction of the hydroelectric dam on the river Contingo, the private Indian council of Roraima state said in a statement.

US to shift 8,000 Cubans:

The US military will move 8,000 Cuban refugees from Panama to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, next month before the March 6 expiration of an agreement with Panama giving them haven, the Pentagon said on Thursday. Reuter reports from Washington.

They will join some 21,200 other Cuban refugees now at the US navy base in Guantanamo Bay, where all will be allowed to remain "indefinitely" unless they choose to return home, said Defence Department spokesman Dennis Box.

Quake jolts Indonesia:

An earthquake registering 5.0 on the open-ended Richter scale yesterday jolted the island province of Maluku in eastern Indonesia, the meteorological office said. AFP reports from Jakarta.

The earthquake struck at 0506 gmt and was centered some 100 kilometers (62 miles) under the floor of the Sea of Seram, about 100 kilometers northwest the province's capital city of Ambon, the office said.

50 flee camp to see Pope:

About 50 Vietnamese escaped a Refugee camp to join the 3.5 million people greeting Pope John Paul II on his trip to the Philippines, organisers told The Associated Press on Friday. AP reports from Manila.

The Pope is on a four-nation tour of Asia. "I escaped just to see the Holy Father", said a 24-year-old woman who identified herself only as Kim. She said she was among 50 refugees who fled the refugee camp in Palawan island, about 592 kilometers (370 miles) southwest of Manila.

Chinese dissident jailed:

The assistant of China's most famous dissident has been sentenced to two and half years of hard labour, a human rights group said on Friday. AP reports from Beijing.

Tong Yi was sentenced to "re-education through labour" by public security officials on December 22. New York-based Human Rights in China said. The procedure does not require a trial, and rights group said the documents about the sentencing did not list any charge.

Malaysian hanged in Singapore:

Singapore yesterday hanged a 28-year-old Malaysian labourer at Changi prison for drug trafficking, a government statement said. Reuter reports from Singapore.

Ramond Selva Clement was arrested in a Singapore apartment in September 1990 and was found in possession of 90 plastic packets of heroin weighing more than 105 grammes (3.7 ounces), officials said.



Chechen women with an automatic weapon walk on Thursday to the frontline in downtown Grozny. According to reports, Russia sent reinforcements of several hundred naval personnel including marines to the breakaway republic on Thursday. — AFP photo

Murayama returns home:

Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama Friday returned home from a four-day visit to the United States. AFP reports from Tokyo.

Murayama arrived at Haneda Airport in Tokyo. During his first trip to the United States as Premier, Murayama discussed bilateral relations with President Bill Clinton. He also met political and business leaders.

Quake shakes central Japan:

A moderate earthquake measuring 4.1 on the Richterscale shook central Japan areas on Friday afternoon, following a 4.9 quake in the morning. The Meteorological Agency said, AFP reports from Tokyo.

The epicentre of the quake, which occurred at 3:16 pm (06:16 gmt) was located 20 kilometres (12.4 miles) under the Pacific seabed near the island of Miyake, about 150 kms (95 miles) south of Tokyo, the agency said.

US lauds Algerian decision:

The United States applauded Algeria's decision to renounce nuclear weapons by joining the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) on Thursday. Reuter reports from Washington.

Algeria became a party to the 1968 treaty by handing in instruments of accession in London, Washington and Moscow, capitals of the NPT's three "depository powers", the move brought the number of parties to the treaty to 168.

14 Filipino detenus freed:

Fourteen out of 59 political prisoners ordered released by President Fidel Ramos walked out of the national penitentiary Friday but promised to continue a hunger strike to demand freedom for other detainees. AP reports from Manila.

Ramos ordered the release of the 59 on the day Pope John Paul II arrived for a five-day visit. Prisoners' supporters had been asking the Church to have the pontiff lobby for their release.

US wants India, Pakistan to sign NPT, renounce N-arms

NEW DELHI, Jan 13: The United States continues to want India and Pakistan to renounce nuclear weapons by signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. US Defence Secretary William Perry said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

"Containing and reversing the threat of nuclear weapons is a high priority," Perry said in a speech to Indian defence officials and servicemen.

The United States sees the extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty as critically important to the National

security interest of the United States," he said.

We continue to seek the support and the participation of like-minded states."

Both New Delhi and Islamabad have refused to sign the treaty, which is up for extension this year.

India exploded an atomic device in 1974 but says it has not built any nuclear weapons.

Pakistan denies India's charges that it has a nuclear arms programme, but has acknowledged it is capable of making such weapons.

The United States believes both countries could easily build a nuclear weapon.

Perry said Washington was not singling out South Asia for attention and that it recognised India's need for a "capable defence."

But he said it was more important than ever to control the spread of nuclear weapons, especially in South Asia where India and Pakistan must manage bilateral tensions and their nuclear arms potential "raises the stakes dramatically."

"We're still trying to discourage more nations from be-

coming nuclear nations, we have a continuing urge not just to increase the number of nuclear nations but to decrease the number," he said.

The US defence secretary said it would take many years to dismantle the world's 40,000 nuclear weapons. The United States is disassembling 2,000 a year, he said.

"We are many many years away from complete nuclear disarmament," he said. The Non-Proliferation Treaty is not a panacea. Just an important step.



A private car crashed yesterday against the Buckingham Palace entrance, bringing down one of the gates. The driver of the Volkswagen, a man in his twenties, was being interviewed by police and the cause of the collision is not immediately clear. —AFP photo

Karachi police kill 6, free businessman

KARACHI, Jan 13: Police stormed a hoise before dawn Friday and killed six suspected kidnappers and freed a businessman held hostage for almost a week, authorities said, reports AP.

Police said the shootout began around 3 a.m Friday and lasted almost two hours in and around a house in the east part of Karachi, a city wracked by political, religious and criminal violence.

Six men, all suspected of involvement in the kidnapping, were killed. The kidnap victim, businessman Haroon Dada, was freed unharmed. No policemen were injured.

The kidnappers were believed to be members of a radical political group, the Jaiy Sindh Movement, which seeks greater autonomy for the southern province of Sindh.

UN renews sanctions on Iraq

UNITED NATIONS, Jan 13: Disappointing France and Russia, the Security Council on Thursday renewed UN sanctions against Iraq because it remains unconvinced of Baghdad's peaceful intentions, reports AP.

The United States accused Iraq of selling oil secretly through Iran.

Moscow and Paris were major trade partners with Iraq until Saddam Hussein's forces invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Since the Gulf War ended in 1991 with a rout of Iraq, Russia and France for economic reasons have pushed for an easing of the ban on oil ex-

ports and other trade sanctions against Saddam's regime.

The United States in particular opposes any lifting of sanctions because it does not trust Saddam. He sent forces to the Kuwaiti border last fall in a buildup that raised concerns anew about Iraq and the amount of war machinery Baghdad still possesses.

Ambassador Madeleine K Albright told the Council in closed session Thursday that Iraq has "an undisputed track record of violating solemn agreements, claiming cooperation when in fact deliberately concealing truth, attempting to evade sanctions by subterfuge... causing untold suffer-

ing."

Urging that sanctions continue unchanged, she rejected as spurious Iraqi complaints that its hungry populace was suffering because it is only allowed to sell limited amounts of oil for humanitarian relief.

"Frankly, we do not understand why Iraq complains about the suffering of the Iraqi people and yet refuses to accept a mechanism that is specifically designed to help alleviate their plight."

"Use of this mechanism," she said "would yield \$8 or \$9 for each barrel of Iraqi oil, to be spent on food, medicine and other needs of the Iraqi people."

Syria denies secret meets with Israel

DAMASCUS, Jan 13: Syria denied on Thursday reports it had held secret meetings with Israel, reports Reuter.

Information Minister Mohammed Salman described the reports as "fabricated and imaginative" and accused Israeli officials and media of being behind them.

"Such meetings did not and will not take place except within the framework of the negotiations which are held under the auspices of the United States," Salman said in a statement.

Israeli media said on Thursday that Foreign Minister Shimon Peres had secretly met a top Syrian businessman in Paris with the approval of Damascus to try to break a deadlock in peace talks.

Syria refuses to hold secret negotiations with Israel but it agreed recently to hold talks under the auspices of the United States in Washington.

Syria said the talks, in which the Army Chiefs of Staff of both countries and Syrian and Israeli ambassadors to Washington took part, made no progress.

Bid to clear doubts between govt, LTTE

COLOMBO, Jan 13: Government troops and Tamil rebels have been meeting at various levels in the past few days to establish rapport, officials said today as a truce in the war-torn northeast held for a sixth straight day, reports AFP.

Army field commanders and even soldiers have been meeting cadres from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in a bid to "clear doubts and iron out any differences" between the two sides, a military spokesman said.

"The cessation of hostilities is still holding. Now we are seeing more and more contact between the two sides. You can say we are on talking terms now the idea is to get the tension out," said the spokesman.

The two sides Thursday held their first meeting in government-held northern Vavuniya, local officials said. The military team was led by Brigadier Lionel Balagalle while a senior LTTE cadre, Regan led the rebel side.

Troops on the ground were in contact almost daily with LTTE cadres across the sprawling northeast, officials said.

"Sometimes the Tigers try to enter areas where we normally carry out ambushes. So our men politely tell them they cannot be allowed a series of minor violations, mostly revolving around movement of LTTE cadres near military facilities, officials said.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga had expressed confidence Thursday that the truce, which came into effect Sunday, could be extended beyond the two weeks that both sides had originally agreed in a bid to see how their accord worked.

Kumaratunga appointed two Norwegians to head truce monitoring teams, the first time, independent foreign observers were involved in the peace bid.

Representatives from the Netherlands and Canada also are due to join them later.

Kumaratunga and LTTE chieftain Velupillai Prabhakaran signed the accord a week ago to try to speed up the peace process aimed at resolving the island's protracted ethnic conflict.

Malaysian deals with India, France on micro-satellites

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 13: Malaysia has signed deals with France's Arianespace and India to put two micro-satellites in orbit by 2000, following the launching of two major satellites by next year, officials said today, reports AFP.

The Micro-satellites, weighing 40 to 50 kilograms, are about the size of a filing cabinet, are suitable for communication and environmental, scientific and space research purposes, the officials said.

The units cost between 18 and 20 million dollars and will become operational by 2000 after two other major satellites are put into space this year and next year, they added.

"These four launches will firmly position Malaysia among nations that own and operate satellites built to satisfy specific requirements," Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said. Mahathir witnessed today

the signing of three agreements between the Malaysian space and telecommunications research group (Maxstar), Arianespace and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to jointly build and launch the micro satellites.

Mahathir said the first micro-satellite would be launched in July 1997 and carry out scientific and remote operations, such as the gathering of data from the earth for resource management, land use and environmental preservation.

The second micro-satellite, to be launched by 2000, would do material and component testing in space and monitor earth-based pollution.

Mahathir said. Kasturi Rangan, Chairman of India's ISRO, said the micro-satellites could also be developed for commercial use if Malaysia had such requirements.

Mahathir said the micro-satellite project, to come on line after the two major satellites Malaysia would be launching in December and July next year would enhance Malaysia's space technology.

"They may be small, like filing cabinets, and very limited in terms of what they can do. But the project gives us an opportunity to develop and build satellites for the first time," said Mazlan Othman, a spokesman for Maxstar.

Maxstar comprises Binariang Sdn Bhd, Telekom Malaysia Bhd, the Aerospace Science Research Division, the Malaysian Institute of Micro-Electronics Systems and five local universities.

Binariang is a private firm licensed to operate the two major satellites to be launched by Arianespace while Telekom Malaysia is the national telephone company.

Off the Record

Jackson's \$100m suit

LOS ANGELES: Pop superstar Michael Jackson filed a 100 million dollar lawsuit Thursday over a television report about an alleged videotape showing the entertainer in a sexual encounter with a teenager, reports AP.

The Superior Court lawsuit says Diane Dimond, reporter for the TV show "Hard Copy," slandered Jackson by reporting that authorities had reopened their investigation of molestation allegations against him.

The lawsuit stems from a January 9 episode of the syndicated show and an appearance by Dimond the same morning on a KABC AM radio talk show.

Also named in the lawsuit are "Hard Copy" producer Stephen Doran; Paramount Pictures Corp; KABC talks show hosts Roger Barkley and Ken Minyard; and Victor Gutierrez, a writer cited by Dimond as a source.

Jackson, 36, is seeking 100 million dollars in special damages and unspecified punitive damages.

KABC attorney Jean Zoelle declined to comment. A "Hard Copy" spokesman said the show had not yet been served with any papers and stood by its report.

Prosecutors in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara counties, who concluded the Jackson child-sex probe last year without filing charges, said the investigation had not been reopened.

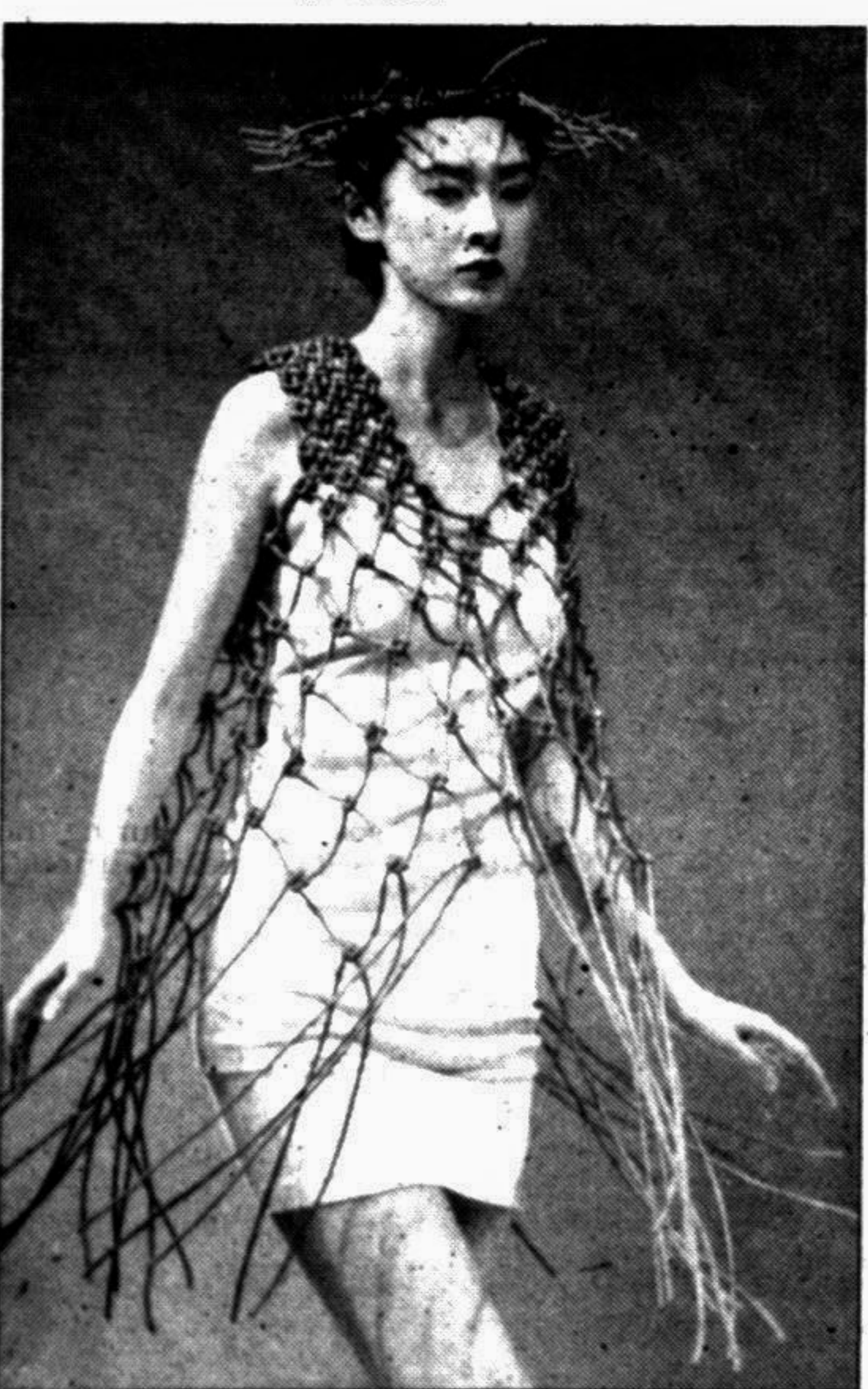
'Imelda should be held in contempt'

HONOLULU: The widow of former Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos should be held in contempt of court because of an agreement she reached with the Philippine government, an attorney for victims of Marcos regime is arguing, reports AP.

Attorney Robert Swift said in a motion in US District Court here Wednesday that Imelda Marcos should be held in contempt for violating a 1991 court order barring her from transferring or liquidating assets of her husband's estate.

Imelda violated the order when she entered into an agreement with the Philippine government to transfer and split estate assets of 1.4 billion dollar, Swift said.

Swift didn't ask for a specific remedy, but said visiting US District Judge Manuel Real could impose a fine and prison sentence on Imelda and her son, Ferdinand Jr who also is named in the contempt motion.



A model displays a light green summer dress covered with mesh designed by Junko Koshino during the '95 spring/summer collection in Tokyo on Friday. — AFP photo

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Notice Inviting Tenders

Tender Notice No. 30/1993-94

Sealed tenders in Bangladesh Form No. 2911 are hereby invited from Sp. 1st class, 1st class 2nd class approved building contractors of P.W.D. for the undermentioned work and will be received by the undersigned as well as by the Executive Engineer, P.W.D. Division, No. VII, Rajshahi (Pabna) Naogaon up to 12-00 Noon on 26-1-95 in their tender box kept for the purpose in the room of the undersigned as well as Executive Engineer, P.W.D. Divn, No. VII Rajshahi/Pabna/Naogaon and will be opened by them in their respective offices on the same day at 12-30 P.M. in presence of the tenderers who may like to remain present.

Sl. No.	Name of work	Estimated cost	Earnest Money	Classes of contractor entitled to submit tender
1	Construction of 800 sq. ft. (3-Units) attached construction of 100 bed modernised Sadar Hospital at Natore during the year 1994-95	Tk 26,14,308/-	Tk 52,286/-	5
2				Special class I & 2nd class approved Building Contractors of P.W.D.

Contract documents consisting of Bangladesh Form No. 2911, schedule of items of work, additional terms and conditions can be seen and purchased from the office of the undersigned, Executive Engineer, P.W.D. Division, No. VII Rajshahi/Pabna/Naogaon on payment of usual charges (Non-refundable). The tender form may be purchased by the contractor himself or his representative on production of authorisation letter bearing the signature of the representative duly attached by the contractor along with the registration book in any day during office hours up to 25-1-95. No tender forms and schedule of items of work etc. will be sold after 5-00 P.M. on 25-1-95.

Executive Engineer
P.W.D. Divn, Natore
Phone-673

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